Alpha Lambda Delta

the Spring 2017 Newsletter
Never have I spoken to that many people on a single night, let alone spoken to that many people simultaneously during a single event. As former Academic Enrichment Chair and incoming Vice President of UConn ALD, what fulfilled me the most about the 2017 Induction Ceremony was personally undergoing for the first time – and first-hand – all the trials and stipulations that traditionally lead to this gratifying experience for our E-Board, our members, and their families.

Coincidentally, I was functioning as the two roles that concurrently had the most stake in induction. Our outgoing Vice President and outgoing President, Jess Estrella and John Potter, respectively, could not make that night’s ceremony, so it became my duty to understand UConn ALD’s annual induction ceremony from the inside out from every lens. Interacting with every service and every contact person, accommodating for our missing guests with changes to the induction script, and – leading up to the induction – maintaining the collectedness necessary to deliver the culmination of months of preparation were responsibilities that fell on my shoulders. Fortunately, I did not have to bear them alone. I had the shoulders of Dr. Carol Polifroni, our KeyNote speaker that night, Dr. Sandra Bushmich, our honorary Faculty of the Year Award winner, former and incoming Presidents Abby Colburn and Anastasia Kipor, respectively, and our advisors Vanessa Licowski and David Ouimette. On top of that, we had the motivation from our friends on the ALD executive board, current ALD members, newly inducted members, their families, and the countless hard-working servicemen and women operating in the background to make this event run smoothly.

Sometimes, it is hard to believe that this event, that just one semester ago seemed so lofty and intangible, flourished into an event that inducted 500 new members into UConn ALD, to date one of the – if not the – largest registered student organizations at the Storrs campus. It’s not just made of ordinary students, either, but of students who have achieved a 3.5 GPA or higher during their first year at college. Actually, Mr. Ouimette put it quite nicely himself in regards to our induction ceremony this year: “It’s always an important event to recognize the academic achievement
of ALD scholars. I find it particularly rewarding to see the large number of students and families here to celebrate their success.”

This event was for your remembrance – in honor of all you inducted members – to recognize your potential. Of the newly elected members, I am proud to have been one of the helping hands which introduced such powerful candidates for leadership, change, and success to the UConn branch of ALD National, which will help you achieve exactly that which you are looking for. I will leave you change-makers with these fleeting words (perhaps past ALD members will vouch for me): your uplifting community, tools to succeed, and de-stressing needs can be found under UConn ALD if you choose to take advantage of what we offer. That which you are seeking, you can find it, and that is what we are here to help you with.

I would like to sincerely thank all of the current ALD members whom this article will also be reaching for your continued support, and especially the support you gave us that night. It could not have operated so smoothly without each of you holding down the fort even throughout the confusion, thereby making Induction Ceremony 2017 such a memorable event for you, us, and your inducted peers.

The Tie-Dye Event Makes for Colorful Afternoon

BY ALEXIS ABBOTTS

On Tuesday, April 11, ALD hosted a tie-dye event on the Great Lawn; it couldn’t have been on a better day. The weather was perfect for some fun tie-dyeing out in the warm sun.

ALD members were encouraged to bring anything they wanted to dye; the possibilities were practically endless! However, for those who didn’t have clothes to tie-dye, or for anyone who just wanted to have even more fun, ALD provided white socks free of charge, so everyone could participate!

Everyone who came by had a great time, and after the fun was over, instructions for washing the newly tie-dyed apparel were sent out via email. Everyone couldn’t wait to reveal their creations!

It was a quick, fun way to spend a hot afternoon. Hopefully this colorful event will return in the semesters ahead.
The coin drive from March 30 to 31 was a joint effort between UConn’s Humanity First team and Alpha Lambda Delta. The proceeds will be going toward the “Our Kids, Our Future Project”, which focuses on raising funds for insufficiently supported public schools. Their mission, which is to better children’s education and enhance overall academic performance, has been active for many years and in many different areas such as Baltimore, Portland, and San Jose.

The coin drive took place in UConn’s Student Union. Over two days, the drive raised about $75 in funds – a notable sum – from donations in the form of small change. In addition to the satisfaction of helping the charity, donors were also entered in their choice of raffles for their contribution, with prizes consisting of gift cards. Generous volunteers from both ALD and Humanity First made the coin drive an overall success.

The money will soon go toward supporting students and teachers, as well as for providing school materials, academic awards, and healthcare services in Humanity First’s next project. As Humanity First’s project website states: “A good student today is better positioned to become a successful member of the society tomorrow”. The coin drive is therefore helping the next generation of workers and subsequently improving our future society.

Additionally, a Dessert and Trivia Night, held on April 27th, was another joint event between Alpha Lambda Delta and UConn’s Humanity First. The event was meant to raise awareness for the Water for Life project, which raises money to build new wells in underprivileged societies. Just last year, Humanity First built a new well in Kenya. This year, funds will go toward building a new well in Ghana, where many people do not have easy access to water.

Dessert and Trivia Night opened with an informative presentation on the struggles of third-world populations in their search for clean water. Many people must walk for miles and spend entire days simply transporting water for later use. By building wells, the Water for Life project greatly improves the quality of life for entire communities by reducing the risk of water-related health problems and drastically reducing the time expended on transporting water.

The event itself featured a variety of amazing desserts to sample from multiple different countries, including eclairs and macarons from France, gulab jamun (a milk-solid based dish) from India, Mochi from Japan, and cheesecake and tiramisu from Greece, amongst others.
The trivia competition consisted of around four teams of a couple students each. The questions were designed to further enhance understanding of the importance and effects of water around the world, with categories including geography, the Water for Life project, and water consumption. In the end, Team 1, consisting of two students, won and received water bottles for their victory.

Overall, $50 was raised towards the Water for Life project through generous donations and through the succulent plant sale. The funds will help Humanity First build their next water well in Ghana.

ALD Trivia Night Tests Members’ Minds

BY ALEXIS ABBOTTS

On Tuesday, April 25th, ALD hosted its annual trivia night. Members signed up as teams to compete against one another, answering various questions in different categories while also munching on pizza.

To establish the categories, Academic Chair Diante Felton had each member of the E-Board create their own category and accompanying questions and answers. This time around, the categories included: Music, Sports, Movies, UConn, Disney, Flowers, English & Grammar, Numbers, and America. Each E-Board member emceed and scored their own category. Teams were given time to answer all questions in each category before turning them in and awaiting scoring.

Diante’s category, “Music”, was saved until the end, causing a surprising tension in the air when a tie was revealed. Fortunately, one team came out on top in the end, with each member of the team receiving gift cards.

As a consolation prize, everyone who came to trivia night was offered an ALD shirt free of charge; everyone was a winner!
Flowerfest: Hello, Spring!

BY ANAND VEERARAGHAV

On April 20th, 2017, ALD held its annual fundraiser, Flowerfest. One of the two biannual season-welcoming events, Flowerfest is ALD’s event that celebrates spring’s arrival. In this event, ALD celebrates by selling various goods, including cacti. In addition, for a price, students could buy and paint small flowerpots. This year’s Flowerfest did see some changes from previous years’ events, which President Anastasia Kipor highlighted.

“We didn’t get anything from dining services this time,” said Kipor, a rising junior. In comparison, last year’s Flowerfest had various goods from dining services, including cookies and lemonade. ALD had reasons for changing Flowerfest this year, one being the timing. Kipor noted that Flowerfest this year was part of Spring Weekend, so ALD “started selling seeds” and “added more to decorations.” These new ideas did resonate well with student consumers, who enjoyed painting the pots and doing the related activities.

In addition, a major difference between this year’s Flowerfest and last year’s was that Flowerfest was outdoors. A traditionally outdoor event, rain tarnished ALD’s hopes in both 2015 and 2016, confining Flowerfest within the Student Union. Indeed, Kipor remarked, “we had way more people stopping by” to inquire about our event and make purchases.

In 2016, Flowerfest yielded $157, while 2015 only gave $83. This year, ALD made a whopping $350, well more than twice the amount of last year. With a fundraising goal of $200-$300, Kipor remarked that we “absolutely” beat the expected totals.
The volunteers at the event were an important component of Flowerfest’s success. Kipor remarked that she felt “they had a lot of fun and enjoyed spending time outside.” As a volunteer myself, I was glad to see the traffic ALD received this year. In both 2015 and 2016, I felt the effects of the weather, and hoped I could see an outdoor Flowerfest at least once. Since I am a rising senior, this is my last year with ALD, so naturally, I was glad to get the chance to witness the event’s true potential at last.

Kipor concluded by restating her main message, as she was relieved that “the weather was great.” Flowerfest was a wild success this year, despite competing with many events—including a number that were free—during Spring Weekend. In the fall, ALD will host Flowerfest’s twin fundraiser, Pumpkinfest, to celebrate the coming of autumn.
Ice Cream: A Cool Way to End the Year
BY ANAND VEERARAGHAV

On May 1, Alpha Lambda Delta hosted an ice cream social for its members. An end-of-the-year event, it served to relieve students during finals, taking place on the Monday starting exam week. ALD purchased the ice cream from the Dairy Bar, and additional materials from Big Y and Price Chopper. Rebecca Shepherd, Social Chair, elaborated.

Chocolate chip cookie dough, mint chocolate chip, vanilla ice cream, [and] chocolate brownie fudge were the flavors ALD chose, said Shepherd, a rising senior. Toppings included “M&Ms, peanut butter cups, gummy bears, chocolate syrup, Oreos, sprinkles (rainbow and chocolate), and whipped cream,” she added. Shepherd also stated that ALD purchased an additional tub of vanilla ice cream, given its popularity from past events. Shepherd lauded the Dairy Bar, attributing the event’s success to it.

Prior to the event, ALD distributed a survey to members to find out their preferences. According to Shepherd, 108 people responded. Amongst other things, ALD added peanut butter cups out of popular demand. It was also the first time ALD had chocolate brownie fudge ice cream, for the same reason. Ultimately, 62 people attended, as indicated by the sign-in sheet.

“This year we experimented,” said Shepherd, regarding the event’s role in relieving stress. In the past, the event was earlier in the semester, rather than during finals week. Shepherd noted that some members may have been taking their exams during the event, and thus, could not attend.

Still, Shepherd remarked that the event was a success, calling it a “huge hit,” and noting that it was “the first ice cream social we spent” with the current executive board. In my own experience, I noticed the line for ice cream covered almost the entire perimeter in the room. ALD will continue having such events in the future.
Meet the New E-Board Members

**Alexis Abbotts – Newsletter Chair**

Art Major, English Minor

**Hobbies:** Drawing/painting, writing, tennis, making people laugh

**Why did you join the E-Board?:** I knew as soon as I was inducted that I wanted to be a big part of this organization. I knew I had skills to lend and just went for it!

**What do you plan on doing for ALD?:** I want to contribute my ideas for activities and events, but also use my art and writing abilities to publish an informative and awesome newsletter.

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**Dante Felton – Academic Chair**

Business Management Major

**Hobbies:** Photography, music (vocals), tennis, volleyball

**Why did you join the E-Board?:** I joined the E-Board because I value academics; as a result, I took a position that allows me to help my fellow members get the most out of their education.

**Why ALD?:** ALD is an opportunity to reap benefits that few can take. They say when opportunity knocks, you answer. That's exactly what I am doing; taking as many opportunities as I can get.

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**Nick Olson – Major Events Coordinator**

Biomedical Engineering Major, PreMed

**Hobbies:** Running and listening to music

**Why did you join the E-Board?:**

I joined the E-Board because I desired to hold an executive position in a group, and be able to have an impact.

**Why ALD?:** ALD was the perfect match as far as being a social group and a service group, and I saw the opportunity for me to get my hands on something that can touch and affect many people.

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**Ziyi Zhao – Community Outreach Chair**

Marketing Major

**Hobbies:** Reading, singing, traveling

**Why did you join the E-Board?:** I was in Key Club and National Honor Society when I was in high school, and enjoy doing community service.

**What do you plan on doing for ALD?:** We could hold a competition inside ALD and set up several groups to do something like a clothes drive, shoe drive, etc.
Hi ALD,

As an outgoing freshman and rising sophomore here at UConn, I've experienced more in the past nine months than I probably have in my entire life. My eyes have been opened very wide to see the wonderful new world available to me: college. It’s been an adjustment, but it’s been worth it.

Joining Alpha Lambda Delta was the start of my college career. It wasn’t my acceptance into UConn, and it wasn’t the start of classes this past August. When I got that email after first semester ended, saying I had done well enough academically to join this organization, I knew that college was only beginning for me. At induction, hearing everyone speak so highly of this group made the gears in my head turn. I’ve always been one to lie low and let opportunities pass by, but this time was different. I knew I wanted to be involved with ALD on a higher level.

I feel right at home as Newsletter Chair, and I’m so glad to be a part of a group of wonderful people that aim to bring ALD nothing but fun, happiness, and sometimes pizza. The E-Board has been so welcoming to the other new chairs and me, and I couldn’t ask for a better group to be the structure of this organization. I remember walking out of our first E-Board meeting and thinking, these are my people.

I know the world is a bit of a scary place right now. But hopefully, this newsletter can remind you that even within the midst of drama and confusion, there are still good things going on, especially here at UConn and within ALD.

It’s been an interesting journey so far, and I hope that the semesters ahead are just as fun and eye-opening (I know they will be).

Have a great summer, and I’ll see you all in August,

Alexis Abbotts

Newsletter Chair